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(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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1. The ex-Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husayni, has complained that he is being completely neglected by the Egyptian Government. He stated that, during the September 1954 arrests of Ikhwan-al-Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood), guards in front of his house recorded in a special book the full name and purpose of visit of each of his visitors. When the Mufti complained to the Ministry of Interior, the book was removed.
2. The Mufti promised all possible help for the Islamic Congress scheduled for January 1956 [in Jerusalem]. He expressed his intention to a) contact all his friends to encourage them to support Sa'id Ramadan, exiled Egyptian Ikhwan leader currently in Damascus, in his preparations for the Congress¹; and b) discuss with Ramadan during 1955 the financial problems and special propaganda measures involved in plans for the Congress.
3. The Mufti stated that the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC)-sponsored Islamic Congress in Mecca would certainly be boycotted by Islamic political leaders and that King Sa'ud was prepared to drop the plan as a result of the cooling of Sa'udi-Egyptian relations². The Mufti declared that he himself had never favored the RCC-sponsored Mecca Congress, but that he would support Sa'id Ramadan's plans for the Jerusalem Congress because the main purpose of that Congress is to "maintain a united front against the Jewish state."
4. On 13 December 1954 at a reception at the Iraqi Embassy in Cairo for Iraqi Foreign Minister Musa al-Shabandar, the former Grand Mufti complained bitterly about his present position in Egypt to a non-Egyptian Arab. The Mufti, who appeared to be very tired and in a testy mood, said that he was surrounded by Egyptian Government spies wherever he went. He stated that even at the reception he felt that he was being observed by agents who would report "to the officers."

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5. The Mufti claimed to have received, through a recently arrived visitor, a letter from his daughter and son-in-law who are now in Damascus.³ In the letter, the son-in-law wrote that he was joining the efforts of exiled Egyptian Ikhwan-al-Muslimin leader Sa'id Ramadan to organize a successful World Islamic Congress at Jerusalem. They would bring together all Muslim political and religious leaders to stand together against Western attempts to bring the Islamic world into Western alliances until the Palestine question had been solved, in accordance with the demands of the Arab world.
6. The letter assured the Mufti that he would find a friendly reception in Damascus when he came to visit his daughter and son-in-law and that there would be much for him to do after discussions with Ramadan and his friends.
7. The Mufti expressed the following opinions:
 - a. Damascus will once again become a real Islamic center as it was under the Umayyids.
 - b. Should he decide to move to Damascus, his role there would be an important one.
 - c. The present Egyptian Government lost its chance of becoming a leader in pan-Arab affairs.
 - d. The Ikhwan trials have finally opened the eyes of all Muslims and proved that the RCC officers can no longer be regarded as representative of the Muslim world.
 - e. The Syrian Ikhwan will become more influential in Syrian internal affairs now that Sa'id Ramadan has activated them by giving their leaders a chance to participate in the Palestine struggle.
 - f. Syrian Ikhwan, under Ramadan's leadership, will also fight against "infected" Iraq, where the West has deprived the dynasty and the Government of all initiative.
8. The ex-Mufti stated that his Cairo office has already approached the Syrian Government in order to learn whether his move to Damascus would be welcome to the Syrian Government. However, the Mufti expressed doubt as to the stability of the present Syrian Government and uncertainty that he would be better off in Damascus than he is in Cairo.

Washington Comments

1. See CS-52230 and CS-52230a for accounts of the activities of Sa'id Ramadan and other exiled Egyptian Ikhwan leaders in connection with the Jerusalem Congress.
2. In CS-54315 a reliable source reported that al-Sadat has not been coordinating the activities of the Secretariat of the Islamic Congress (Mecca) with King Sa'ud. As a result, al-Sadat is to go to Saudi Arabia to brief the King.

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Source Comment. The Saudi-Egyptian rift is in part due to the insufficient answers given the King in connection with the Ikhwan issue.

3. Field Comment. This son-in-law, an Egyptian, had been an officer in the Egyptian Army, but was dismissed as a supporter of ex-President Muhammad Najib following the crisis of March-April 1954. Subsequently, warned of his impending arrest, he and his wife, the ex-Mufti's daughter, left Egypt for Damascus.

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